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Battalion Commander's Greeting

Greetings from the 1st Battalion 121st Field Artillery, which is composed of soldiers from National Guard armories in Milwaukee, Sussex, Plymouth and a detachment in Two Rivers. Many more soldiers from all over the State of WI volunteered to fill our ranks. Once we arrived at Camp Shelby, MS we were augmented with additional soldiers from Maine and Nevada. Our total personnel strength is over 620 soldiers.

We have trained here over the past month and into next couple before deploying overseas. Once in place in the theater of operations we start our one year "boots on the ground."

Training: After days of in-processing, records review,

medical evaluations, immunizations etc. we started our individual training. Marksmanship training is first and foremost. Thus, we started marksmanship training and qualification. Most soldiers are equipped with both a M4 - Carbine (Rifle) and a M9 - 9mm Beretta (Pistol). Our gunners carry a light machine gun or squad automatic weapon (SAW). Each section of 4 soldiers is additionally equipped with a crew served weapon. A crew is a two man team that mans one of 3 platforms, a medium machine gun - M240B, a heavy machine gun - Browning M2, and a fully automatic grenade launcher - MK249 (fires grenades like a machine gun).

We also attend various briefings on techniques tactics

and procedures (TTPs) on theater level training requirements. (Plain English: how the army has adapted combat patrols in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan).

We have a very aggressive training plan that exercises both individual and crew skills. We are building precision in battle drills that will soon be second nature to every soldier and section. And we are forward leaning to the challenging training environment that is in the very near future.

"I am so very proud of the soldiers that are committed to making a difference despite the great personal sacrifices each one is making. I am also very proud of our families. You are enduring the sacrifices of your own even greater than ours! You are contributing in a very real way to the fight for freedom. You are great Americans, be proud!"

Scott T. Rice
Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding

CSM Corner

Hello family and friends,

Even before our arrival at Camp Shelby, our battalion has made a very good impression on all of the people that we've come in contact with here. You should be very proud, as I am, of the professionalism exhibited by your Soldier throughout this first month of our deployment. Everybody is pitching in and doing their part to add to the many accomplishments of our unit. Often our days here are very long and are sometimes filled with several hours of waiting for the next event to happen. Despite this, the Soldiers of this battalion remain highly motivated as we prepare for our mission overseas.

CSM Jeff Fletcher





Axe Men Annex by CPT Cousins, Commanding

What a busy few weeks it's been since we left Maine. We have been operating between the FOB (Forward Operating Base) immersion and cantonment areas accomplishing our tasks of processing into Camp Shelby, MS and conducting individual marksmanship training while we waited for equipment to arrive from Wisconsin.

The motivation, moral and esprit de corps of the soldiers is high and you should all be proud of the professionalism your loved ones are exhibiting.

The acclimation process

of us "northerners" has gone extremely well. Although the first couple of days here were similar to the best summer days we could receive in Maine with high temperatures and mild humidity; for the most part, Mother Nature has cooperated in being merciful to us throughout the acclimation process. Temperatures have fluctuated between low 70's to low 90's with humidity at 80%.

We are now complete with the arrival of the

Nevada/Arizona soldiers. The group will initially train as a separate element and then link up with us.



HHC Hawks Headlines by CPT Agen, Commanding

Dear Family Members,
I am CPT Kevin Agen, the Company Commander, of HHC. Previously I was assigned as the 2-127th Rear Detachment Commander for the past year; so I do have insight of what you may be going through. I do caution you to go through your chain of concern and your Rear Detachment Personnel on any issues you might be experiencing. Based on Personal Experience, your time to resolve such issues will be drastically reduced by using your FRG and Rear Detachment personnel.

My duty and responsibility is to ensure each soldier has the proper and necessary training to assist them in their own personal safety as well as their comrades.

In the past several weeks we have had a flurry of activity and training events. We are coming together as a strong team who is determined to be professional and successful in our mission. I am impressed with your soldiers' morale, attitude, and willingness to learn, especially since there is very little personal time because of a full schedule 7 days a week.

Their attitude and proficiency has been and

continues to be recognized by our trainers here at Camp Shelby. They are impressed with our unit and this instills confidence in your soldier that they are being trained well and correctly.

Again, I encourage you to be active and participate in our Family Readiness Group. There are support programs to assist you during this time away from your loved one. FRG and the Rear Detachment will work hard to keep you informed and assist you with personal needs associated with this deployment. The military recognizes your welfare directly affects the performance of your soldier and that of the Unit's overall mission. Therefore, it is important that we do our best to make these programs work personally for you.

God Bless and Thank You for your support!



Roughneck Readings

by CPT Beilfuss, Commanding

On 13 May 2006, 151 members of Company C 1-121 woke up at 0415, did 45 minutes of physical training (PT), showered, ate breakfast, and boarded a bus at 0630 to qualify with the M9 pistol. The majority of the day was spent in about 45 lbs of body armor and 86 degree heat with 90% humidity. The duty day ended at 23:00 hours.

By my count that's close to 20 hours of hard labor. The reward the next day was a 0615 formation and a 14 hour day under the same conditions. This has been pretty typical during the first 3 ½ weeks at beautiful Camp Shelby.

Each day I'm surprised at the level of dedication by the individual Company C soldier. Everyone has left behind a family, friends, or careers to contribute as a volunteer to our nation's defense.

Overall, life at Camp Shelby is a little Spartan. The latrines and dining facilities have cinder block walls, concrete floors, and roofs patched with blue tarps (due to Katrina). Most of the windows and doors are badly in need of replacement or repair and we have seen our share of large insects.

I have come to truly appreciate Wisconsin's



educational system. The locals or Bubbas, as they are affectionately called, can be a bit slow to understand or act with any sense of urgency. In fact, the word urgency probably shouldn't be used to describe the Bubbas. Sense of sloth makes more sense.

I think I can speak for most in saying that the time has gone relatively quickly. The training has been good, but it's also clear that the real challenges lay ahead.

CPT Matt Beilfuss
Roughneck 6





Bandits brief By Cpt Feucht Commanding.

We have arrived here at Camp Shelby and a busy few weeks it's been since we left Wisconsin. We have been operating between the FOB (Forward Operating Base) immersion and cantonment areas, with squad and team level training. Accomplishing tasks such as Combat Lifesaver, Urban Operation, and Land Navigation. We have conducted both individual marksmanship training as well as crew serve weapons training.

The motivation, moral and esprit de corps of the soldiers is high and

you should all be proud of the professionalism your loved ones are exhibiting here at Camp Shelby.

A field training exercise was recently conducted as a trail run for Bravo's new "secret mission". The four secret mission team members disguised themselves as "Hadjis" and made contact with three of the front line platoons in the company.

In 1st Sgt Jorsch's words "It went really well."

MSG Michael Kaluzny mentally prepares for his role as "Khalil Isnay" during a recent covert mission training session.



SFC Scott Vanderbloomen portrayed camel jockey "Swami Abu Wabu" during a recent secret training session.

Common Acronyms

FRG:
Family Readiness
Group

ACU:
Army Combat
Uniform

FOB:
Forward Operating
Base

LES:
Leave and Earnings
Statement

CCO:
Close Combat Optical

BAH:
Basic Allowance for Housing

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